

# THE SPARK GAP

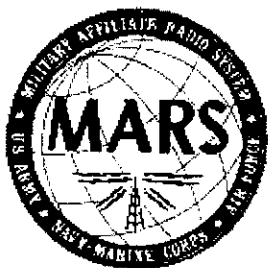
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

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MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

FEBRUARY 2003

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## U.S. AIR FORCE MARS WD9DVA CONTACTS MARS

Working MARS radio has been a rewarding experience for Ed Woods-WD9DVA. Licensed since the early '70s, Woods has kept a steady hand on the microphone while serving the communications needs of U.S. Air Force personnel stationed around the world.

As state Air Force MARS coordinator, Woods is always looking for a few good men and women to help with the MARS program. Join us for the MARC February 15th meeting as Ed Woods covers the history and mission of Military Amateur Radio Service.

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## ALERT TO ALL AMATEURS

**Indiana Bill No. 109** needs support by all amateurs state wide to elevate an age old problem concerning antenna height in municipalities and counties.

**Synopsis:** Regulation of amateur radio antennas. Requires a municipality or county to comply with an FCC ruling concerning amateur radio preemption or a regulation related to amateur radio service. Prohibits a municipality or county from restricting the height of amateur radio antennas to less than 75 feet above ground level.

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Senate Bill 109 cont. ---

Your support is needed to help with the passage of the Senate Bill. We encourage all amateurs to write their State Senate and House Representatives to have them pass this bill and send it to the Governors desk for his signature.

You can find out more details by visiting the State of Indiana Web Page:

<http://www.in.gov/legislative/bills/2003/IN/IN0109.1.html>

The bill has been referred to the Committee on Government Affairs and Interstate Cooperation.

The passage of **Senate Bill No. 109** would be of great benefit to all amateurs in Indiana and there would be no financial impact on the State budget.

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## THE RIGHT STUFF

Johnson county hams proved they had the right stuff January 25th during the State Emergency Management Agency's semi-annual RACES communications test. According to SEMA officials, Johnson county amateurs recorded 13 base stations, one mobile and five communications specialists at the county EOC. During the two hour exercise, 2-meter check-ins were made to the Johnson county EOC. Those numbers were reported to the state operations center via 80,40,30 and 10 meters. County RACES director Jay Chrisman-AA9YP directed the local 2-meter net while Matt Payne-KB9UJE communicated using the digital PSK31 mode. ARES director Jerry Schantz-W9JJS and Brian Murrey-KB9BVM assisted at the EOC. Chuck Moser-KB9TEO relayed information to the state net using 2 meter and HF mobile communications. Jack Parker-W8ISH helped relay information from his base station on all of the bands including PSK31 and APRS. Future communications exercises expect to see more hams operating mobile or portable as they prepare for emergency field operations. Last September's tornado outbreak proved that amateur radio operators can be most useful when they are field ready.

-W8ISH

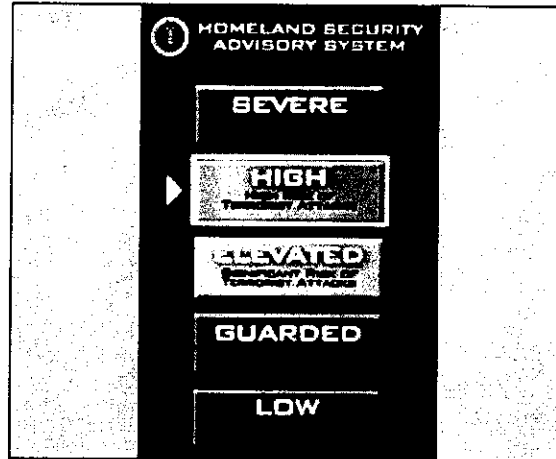


Dr. Gary Stouder-K9SG talking about Amateur satellites and how he was able to set up a communications link between the International Space Station and a group of young hams at Greenfield High School on October 22, 2001. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Stouder and the Hancock County Amateur Radio Club they now have over 20 licensed hams at the Greenfield junior and senior high schools. Their efforts lead to a credited class at the high school and a grant from the ARRL as one of the first schools in the country to participate in the ARRL "Big Project". It's an effort by the national organization to get young people involved with amateur radio at their school.

Dr. Stouder was our guest speaker at our January MARC meeting.

..... W8ISH

## Homeland Security Threat Level Raised to Orange



### HOW CAN WE HELP AS AMATEURS?

President Bush raised the Homeland Security Advisory System threat level to High Condition (Orange) Friday afternoon. Attorney General John Ashcroft and Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge announced the threat level change.

A High Condition is declared when there is a high risk of terrorist attacks. In addition to the measures taken in the previous threat conditions, federal departments and agencies will consider the following protective measures:

- Coordinate necessary security efforts with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, National Guard or other security and armed forces;
- Take additional precautions at public events, possibly considering alternative venues or even cancellation;
- Prepare to execute contingency procedures, such as moving to an alternative site or dispersing the workforce; and
- Restrict access to a threatened facility to essential personnel only.

How can we help ..... cont.

With this in mind as amateur radio operators we should always be ready to assist:

- Take your favorite HT with you everywhere and a charged spare battery pack.
- Wherever you are, be aware of your surroundings. The very nature of terrorism suggests there may be little or no warning.
- Take precautions when traveling. Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior. Do not accept packages from strangers. Do not leave luggage unattended.
- Do not be afraid to move or leave if you feel uncomfortable or if something does not seem right.
- Learn where emergency exits are located in buildings you frequent. Notice where exits are when you enter unfamiliar buildings. Plan how to get out of that building and note where the staircases are located.
- Assemble a disaster supply kit at home and learn first aid. Separate the supplies you would take if you had to evacuate quickly, and put them in a backpack or container, ready to go.
- Be familiar with different types of fire extinguishers and how to locate them.
- Know your workplace and evacuation routes.

Make sure you know the operation of your HT and can program it in the field. Your HT may be the only communication available to you. Don't rely on the "cell phone", service can stop at anytime or not be useable due to overuse by those using the cell site.

If you are in a situation when something happens try to remain calm and get to a safe location and then establish communications with another ham. You can be assured that others will be listening in on the repeater frequencies and simplex such as 146.520 MHz.

For more information go to the FEMA web page: <http://www.fema.gov>

These are indeed strange and trying times for all of us so be prepared for you and your family.

## NEW FROM UNIDEN!

Local amateur radio operators who enjoyed listening to police runs can once again be in on the action. Uniden has unveiled their long awaited digital capable scanners, and the response has been overwhelming! Many stores are back-ordered, but supplies should be replenished fairly rapidly. Uniden has initially offered two models, the portable (handheld) BC-250D, and the Base (or Mobile) 785D. Both are being offered at introductory prices of about \$350, depending on where one looks. But don't put away your wallet yet... To decode the digital signals from the Johnson County system, a add-on card must also be purchased. Installation (and removal) of the card is a breeze. The card will lighten your pocket by an additional \$300, again depending on where one looks. The high cost of the card is largely due to licensing costs that had to be paid to Motorola for use of their patented IBME vocoder circuitry. Come down to the club meeting in February, and see the BC250D demonstrated after the meeting!

Matt KB9UJE



**UNIDEN BC-250D**



**UNIDEN BC-785D**

## INDIANA HAMFESTS

**Feb. 22**

**La Porte ARC Winter Hamfest**, <http://www.k9jsi.org>

**March 29**

**Michigan City Hamfest "Spring Fling"**, <http://home.attbi.com/~w9ly>

**June 8**

**Wabash Hamfest**, Wabash IN, Talk-in 147.03(+), [Ticket Info](#)

**Aug. 3**

**Land-of-Lakes Hamfest**, Angola IN, [sharon.l.brown@gte.net](mailto:sharon.l.brown@gte.net)

**Aug. 10**

**Greentown Hamfest**, Greentown IN, [K9NQW](http://www.grantarc.com/greentown.html) , <http://www.grantarc.com/greentown.html>

**Nov. 15-16**

**Indiana State Convention**, Fort Wayne IN, [kb9ih@arrl.net](mailto:kb9ih@arrl.net) , [web site](#)

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## INDY HAMFEST 2003

The INDY HAMFEST for 2003 is alive and well and is to be held on Saturday July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2003. It will be at a new location, Camp Sertoma, US Hwy 52 and German Church Road, Indianapolis. For years the hamfest was held at the Marion County Fair Grounds but the last few years there was trouble and confusion over dates that could be used for this event. Having it in a new location in Marion County has now solved this problem.

Check the web page for current information: <http://www.indyhamfest.com>

## TECHNICIAN LICENSE CLASS TO START IN MARCH

IF YOU HAVE EVER WANTED TO GET INTO THE SPACE-AGE HOBBY OF AMATEUR RADIO, HERE IS YOUR CHANCE. A FREE EIGHT-WEEK BEGINNERS' COURSE WILL START ON TUESDAY, MARCH 4 AT 7:00 PM AT:

FRIEDENS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST,  
8300 S. MERIDIAN STREET  
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46227  
(JUST NORTH OF GERMAN PARK)

THE COURSE, SPONSORED BY THE MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB OF JOHNSON COUNTY, WILL TEACH STUDENTS OF ALL AGES THE MORSE CODE, BASIC ELECTRONICS AND EVERYTHING ELSE NEEDED TO PASS THE NECESSARY FCC TESTS AND GET THEIR TECHNICIAN AMATEUR LICENSE. TESTING FOR THE LICENSES WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE END OF THE COURSE THROUGH THE VOLUNTEER EXAMINER PROGRAM, BY AMATEURS.

THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THE COURSE, AND NO AGE LIMIT, SO YOUNGSTERS ARE WELCOME.

THE TEXTBOOK REQUIRED IS AVAILABLE ON PREORDER THROUGH THE CLUB AT \$15.00, OR CAN BE BOUGHT AT A HIGHER COST THROUGH [WWW.ARRL.ORG](http://WWW.ARRL.ORG) ONLINE.

ANYONE WANTING MORE INFORMATION CAN CALL DAVE WENDT KA9OOH AT 317-881-6531 OR EMAILING [wendt@indy.net](mailto:wendt@indy.net).

..... Dave Wendt KA9OOH



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Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets at 0800 EST the third Saturday of each month at the Johnson County Law Enforcement Center in the Emergency Operations Center. All hams are encouraged to attend this meeting and VE testing is held January through November after the meeting has ended.

MARC operates the 146.835 MHz (141.5 PL) repeater and all hams are welcome to use it.

For more information please visit our club web page at: <http://www.midstatehams.org>